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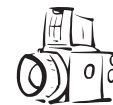
- Try using an app. Checker, Associated, and Calgary United Cabs all have an app that connects you with a ride.
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### MAKE CHRISTMAS MORNING MORE BACON-Y

APPLE PANCAKE WITH BACON:  
THE PERFECT BREAKFAST FOR A  
DAY OF CONSUMPTION **PAGE 20**



### Magnotta guilty on all charges

Jury hands down first-degree  
murder sentence, rejects not-  
criminally-responsible defence  
**PAGE 8**

### Happy holidays, Calgary!

We're taking Christmas off, but  
pick up our Boxing Day edition,  
with a special look ahead at 2015



## MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Seven-year-old Owen Ziolkoski, left, holds the hand of his younger brother Reid, 4, as they skate through Olympic Plaza on Tuesday afternoon. We hope you have a safe and happy holiday season, Calgary, and we'll see you in 2015! JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

## Daughter hopes for Christmas miracle

**Christmastime wish.**  
Local woman aims to  
find long-lost relative  
for dying mother

Shannon Hogg's mission is to deliver a Christmas present to her dying mother, one that's more valuable than anything money can buy.

Sharon Hogg, 61, was first diagnosed with a brain tumour in late July and had it removed in August.

A biopsy determined she has glioblastoma, which, as Shannon describes it, is "the most aggressive form of brain cancer you can get."

After her mother was diagnosed, Sharon began to open up about a portion of her past that had been kept largely secret. Her sister, Shannon's aunt, had died years ago, but had given birth to a daughter that was put up for adoption.

Sharon had never really met her niece.

Shannon, who lives in Calgary, had asked her grandmother once before, when she



Shannon Hogg places a tearful kiss on the cheek of her mother Sharon Hogg, who is dying of cancer.

CONTRIBUTED

was 14, about her cousin, but was told "to never bring it up again and never talk about it."

But it appears being faced with her own mortality led Sharon to open the vault, so to speak.

"She told me her actual name for the first time (Heather, last name withheld), she told me the birth father's name, where she was born and all of that," recalled Shannon in an interview. "I said, 'Mom, would you mind if I looked for her?' And she said 'I'd really like that.' She had some tears in her eyes."

Shannon has essentially packed up and headed back

to her hometown of Swift Current, Sask., to be at her mother's bedside. While tending to her needs, she's also taken to the Internet to search for any traces of her cousin. She's posted to numerous Facebook pages and begun investigating who has access to family records — it appears such privilege is available only to immediate family members, but, save for Sharon, none of them are alive anymore.

In recent days, Sharon's condition has worsened and she's become "non-responsive."

"She's in palliative care and it's just a matter of days, they (doctors) think, maybe hours," Shannon said. "She's not going to wake up, she's not going to regain anything."

Still, she's keeping the search alive even if her mother is gone before it concludes.

"Focusing on this just gives me some direction, some purpose in life," Shannon said through tears. "It makes me feel like I'm doing something for our family that should have been done a long time ago."

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO



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- Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Master of the Sikhs



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# Nenshi talks 2014 and what lies ahead

## Year-end interview.

Metro shares select responses from Calgary's mayor; for the full Q&A, visit metronews.ca



**ROBSON FLETCHER**  
robson.fletcher@metronews.ca

Mayor Naheed Nenshi sat down with Metro on Tuesday for a year-end interview.

Here are excerpts of what he had to say.

### Ten years from now, when someone asks you what happened in Calgary in 2014, what will jump to mind first?

It's actually a hard question to answer because after what happened in 2013, the events of 2014 seem a bit smaller, in comparison.

Had we not had a big flood in 2013 we'd probably be talking today about the most snow in 130 years at the beginning of the year. Or we'd be talking about the most snow in 130 years — again — in September and the damage of nearly half of Calgary's trees. Or we'd be talking about a giant fire over Thanksgiving long weekend that left tens of thousands of people without power.

### Despite ample discussion this year, why do you think council couldn't agree on substantive reform on secondary suites?

It's really a weird situation, secondary suites, because every poll, including polls done by opponents, has shown a really overwhelming major-



Mayor Naheed Nenshi in his Christmas-decorated office on Tuesday. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

ity of Calgarians in favour of reform.... To me, it's turning into a farce. Every other city in Canada has done this and, as a result, dogs and cats have not slept together.

We have actually managed to have a slow but stable source of new, affordable housing coming onto the market every year. And council just needs to be able to come to terms with that. People need to be able to take a deep breath, and take the political hit they think is there.

And, by the way, there is no political hit.

**Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson recently said it's time for Alberta to move from its flat tax**

### toward a progressive income-tax rate. Do you agree?

This is not the first boom-bust cycle we've seen and for us to be cancelling — if we do — a badly needed cancer hospital because of the boom-bust cycle really highlights that we're not being as sophisticated as we need to in thinking about how to fund the services we need.

So Don's jumped to a solution. I have not done any work to see if that's the right solution, but I think it's time for us to figure out what to do, because clearly what we've got now is not serving Albertans well.

**Do the mass Wildrose defections to the governing PCs**

### make you more or less likely to ever want to get into a level of government that involves party politics?

The thing that I find dis-appointing about all of this ... is that this all happened behind closed doors. We've crafted a system where the big decisions are made in caucus, not in the legislature.... As for me, well, I've got three years left — at least three years left, depending on whether citizens want to keep me in this job longer than that or not — and I've got a lot of work to do here.

So I'll continue to be a strong voice on a better Alberta and a better Calgary, but I'm sticking around in this job.

## Council training

### 'Relatively small incidents'

Mayor Naheed Nenshi shed more light Tuesday on allegations of misconduct within the office of the city councillors that led council members to agree to "respectful workplace" training following a closed-door meeting last week.

"Essentially what happened was that we had a number of complaints through the whistleblower's office that really showed the limitations of the whistleblower process we have, as it relates to members of council," Nenshi told Metro.

"It was a number of small things that really all went around respectful workplace, whether that is comments of a sexual nature or bullying. They were a number of relatively small incidents but, taken together, the investigator felt that there may be a pattern that should be dealt with before anything worse happens."

After discussing the incidents in private on Dec. 15, council members voted unanimously to organize new training for themselves and their staff "as soon as possible," and to direct the city auditor to "explore new options for investigating and enforcing allegations of misconduct," according to the meeting minutes.

During the public portion of that meeting, Nenshi described the incidents as part of "a systemic problem" surrounding "the general environment in the office of the councillors." ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

1 NEWS

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## Martindale

## Suspected drug overdose death a homicide: Police

Calgary police now believe a 41-year-old man found dead in a Martindale home earlier this year was a victim of a homicide.

It was originally believed Sardar Atiq Khan had died

in May of a drug overdose, but police have since ruled that possibility out after conversations with the medical examiner's office and results from an autopsy.

The case, which is now about seven months old, was treated with suspicion from the beginning, but results needed to be analyzed before it could be publicly investigated as a homicide.

"We don't believe this is a random incident. We believe that the persons involved knew the victim or the victim's family," Staff Sgt. Doug Andrus, with the police homicide unit said. "There were no signs of forced entry and no signs of struggle in the residence."

Police ask anyone with information to call 403-266-1234 or CrimeStoppers.

HELEN PIKE/METRO

## Despite defections

## Wildrose still official Opposition

Alberta's Wildrose party is still the official Opposition.

Speaker Gene Zwozdesky sent a letter to both Wildrose and the Alberta's Liberal party confirming his decision. Zwozdesky says incumbency was the key factor in his ruling.

A defection by former Wildrose leader Danielle Smith and eight other caucus members had left both Wildrose and the Liberals with five seats each. Wildrose house leader Shayne Saskiw applauded the decision saying it strengthens democracy. Saskiw says Wildrose received over 440,000 votes in the last election, which is more than the Liberals and the NDP.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

# Private school teacher: God 'greatest scientist'

**Curriculum.** Critic questions whether private academy is following provincial rules



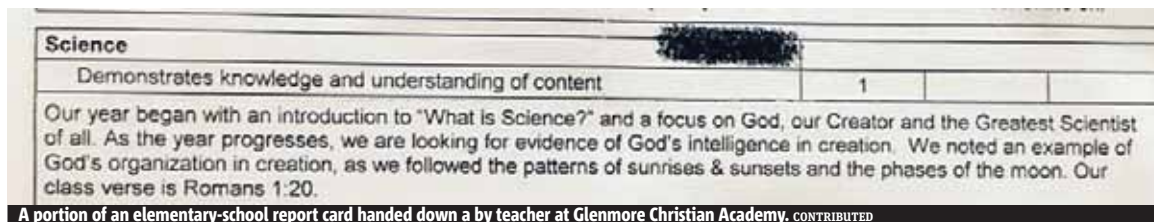
JEREMY NOLAÏS

jeremy.nolais@metronews.ca

Alberta's education minister is being asked to investigate the curriculum at a city private school after a report card in a science class surfaced online stating that God is behind the patterns of sunrises and sunsets as well as the phases of the moon.

Metro has confirmed with the family whose elementary-aged child received the report card, that it was written by a teacher at Glenmore Christian Academy. They requested that the child's identity be withheld.

The report card reads: "Our year began with an introduction to 'What is Science?' and a focus on God, our Creator and the Greatest Scientist of all. As the year progress-



A portion of an elementary-school report card handed down by a teacher at Glenmore Christian Academy. CONTRIBUTED

es, we are looking for evidence of God's intelligence in creation. We noted an example of God's organization in creation, as we followed the patterns of sunrises & sunsets and the phases of the moon. Our class verse is Romans 1:20."

The report card summation stirred buzz when it was posted to Twitter over the weekend and Kent Hehr, Alberta Liberal education critic, said what was taught to the children "clearly is not part of the Alberta curriculum."

"It's expected that science and evolution and the like are taught in our classrooms," he said.

"It appears that this is adopting the theory of intelligent design that has been going

around the United States and, in my view, this does not serve the public interest and the education minister should investigate what's happening in this private school and put a stop to this type of practice."

Hehr has long raised concerns about the freedoms granted to private schools in the province, given that they receive an equivalent of up to 70 per cent of the per-student funding granted to their peers in the public system.

Alberta Education said early estimates indicate the Glenmore Christian Academy will receive \$3.7 million this year for its 811 students. But Alberta Education also said in a statement the provincial school act does grant education

## Catholic teachers input

Alexandra Jurisic, president of the Calgary Catholic Teachers Association, said she couldn't speak for all instructors she represents within the Calgary Catholic School District but said, generally, "distinct" science and faith curriculums are taught.

"Can you be an evolutionary scientist and still believe

in God? Absolutely," she said.

Asked specifically about the teachings at Glenmore Christian Academy, Jurisic said her group respects the "distinct approach to their teaching," but added, "it's not necessarily a fit for our instructional basis. That would not be the kind of thing we would espouse."

authorities the ability to provide alternative programming "emphasizing a particular language, culture, religion or subject matter."

Still, the province cautioned that "The establishment of al-

ternative program, including faith-based, does not remove a school board's obligation to ensure instruction is consistent with the Guide to Education and the Alberta programs of study."

## Tuition. Hikes 'force' student out of province

Currently a student at Edmonton's NAIT, Jonathan Bilodeau had his eyes on a graduate degree in business administration — topping his list were the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta.

But the programs offered by both institutions were among 25 approved for market-modifier tuition hikes Monday in a move that will see eight per cent of students province-wide collectively fork over an additional \$21 million each year.

"It throws off the kind of options you can pursue and, really, just forces me to look outside the province instead of staying at home where I was born and raised," explained Bilodeau.

The U of A's business administration program will see costs skyrocket by 42 per cent to more than \$34,700 while the U of C's will jump 18 per cent to nearly \$38,500.

The province has maintained its market-modification program aims to correct anomalies where institutions in the province are charging less for an educational offering than peer schools elsewhere. The steepest percentage increases were seen at Olds College, where tuition will jump 71 per cent in three programs.

Lisa Collins, provost and University of Alberta registrar, says discussions with students led universities like Edmonton's to allot some dollars towards financial aid.

"All five faculties involved with market modifiers (at U of A) have committed at least 20 per cent of their new source of funding to merit-based funding opportunities for students," she said.

STEPHANIE DUBOIS AND JEREMY NOLAÏS/METRO

# Need for modulars greater in his riding: Dirks



Education Minister Gord Dirks  
METRO FILE

Provincial education minister Gordon Dirks contends that approval of modulars at a school site in his own riding — in the midst of a byelection campaign — had nothing to do with politics but simply came down to a situation of need.

In a sit-down interview Monday, Gordon Dirks fielded questions from Metro for the first time since announcing the approval of modulars for William Reid School Oct. 22, just five days before his name appeared on the ballot in

the riding of Calgary-Elbow, where the facility is located.

Previous requests for comment from the minister had been denied to Metro, and written statements from his press secretary had been provided instead.

Critics lashed out at Dirks' decision to approve the modulars after it was revealed that William Reid ranked No. 6 on a Calgary Board of Education wish list for modulars that had been submitted to the province the very same week.

But Dirks said Monday that modulars were also approved for Cranston, ranked No. 1 on the CBE list, and in Airdrie's East Lake community.

"There were modulars that were approved by the premier and myself as part of the key construction build-out program for the province and for the city," he said.

"There were modulars that were approved here as part of what the CBE had requested and the utilization rate for those two were the highest,"

he added, referring to William Reid and Cranston.

"The department and myself, our view, is that the critical criteria that should be considered is utilization rate."

Dirks, meanwhile, said he believed the remaining CBE modulars would be approved, but didn't commit to a timeline.

"Not every school board in the province gets everything they ask for — it's impossible."

"We simply don't have

## Criteria

The CBE's modular ranking is based on three criteria: a) enrolment, projection, utilization; b) site features, location; and, c) cost compared to average. In each category, a school is assigned a score.

the resources to build that many modulars for all schools across the province," he said.

JEREMY NOLAÏS/METRO

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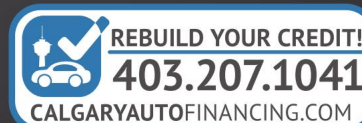


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## Airdrie. Family reunited by thoughtful neighbours

The holidays are a time to be with family, and for one newly settled Airdrie couple Christmas celebrations were looking dire, until their community worked together to give them the best gift imaginable.

After making the big move west, Jeff Balesdent and Jenn Hickey made a tough decision, leaving three kids in the safe and able hands of family back in Nova Scotia while they scouted out southern Alberta, hoping to settle and eventually be reunited with their children.

"It was a matter of saving to be able to afford plane tickets for them to get here," Hickey said.

"It was looking like it was going to have to be after Christmas."

The funds weren't in place and it seemed as if the reunion would just have to wait — until a social-media Christmas miracle took hold.

A co-worker overheard Balesdent talking about his family situation on the phone and jumped into action. With the help of his wife, the two posted on the Airdrie Dads and the Airdrie Moms Facebook page.

Within two-and-a-half hours, tickets were bought and a Good Samaritan offered to fly all the way to Nova Scotia and pick up the youngsters.

"All without us ever asking for help, they just did it," Hickey said, almost in disbelief.

Now, reunited for almost a month, Hickey said it's back to the same old routine, like the kids hadn't spent three months apart from their blended family — and that's one of the best Christmas gifts the couple could have imagined.

"That's all we wanted," Balesdent said.

HELEN PIKE/METRO



Jenn Hickey and Jeff Balesdent are pictured with their three girls in Heritage Park. The blended family was reunited just in time for Christmas after three months apart. CONTRIBUTED



Brenda Cosens looks through the latest donations to her little free library, opening a copy of *A Light in the Attic* by Shel Silverstein. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

# New chapter for 'little free library'

## Forest Lawn.

Community rallies to restock shelves after books were swiped

Community support helped turn the page for a southeast Calgary "little free library" after it was ransacked just days after it popped up.

Brenda Cosens returned to her Forest Lawn home Monday to find that her library, once brimming with books, was completely empty.

"I don't know if somebody didn't understand the con-

## By the numbers

# 13

The number of little free libraries that were set up in Forest Lawn last week.

cept or what," she said. "But it made me a little sad to see that."

With the motto, "Take a book, leave a book," little free libraries have been picking up steam in Calgary, with more than 30 set up through the official Little Free Library organization.

Cosens was one of 13 area

residents who launched a little free library last week, as part of a local project that was spearheaded by community volunteer Michel Selim.

"I wholeheartedly believe that books open doors," said Selim. "I believe in the power of books and I wanted to introduce it to my community as a community engagement initiative."

So after finding her new library emptied, Cosens reached out to Selim hoping to fill the library back up.

Mere hours after Selim posted a photo of the empty library to Twitter and Face-

book, donations from neighbours flooded in. By 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, more than 20 books were added to the library.

"It was a really great response from the neighbourhood," said Cosens. "There are a lot of kids in this neighbourhood who don't have English (as) their first language, so the more literacy that we can help people with, then the better."

Selim hopes the project continues to foster community engagement and plans to have students paint all the libraries in the new year.

JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

# Women's studies class aims to take back piece of Wikipedia



Kim Williams, an associate professor and program co-ordinator in the women's studies program at Mount Royal University. METRO

Wikipedia and women don't always mix.

In fact, estimates from the group Feminists Engage Wikipedia suggest 85 per cent of page editors on the popular community-built encyclopedia site are male.

Wikipedia is also considered, by and large, to be lacking when it comes to non-middle-class and minority figures.

But Kim Williams, an associate professor at Mount Royal University, along with

colleague Jessica Loyer, aimed to inspire their students to rewrite — and create — a little history of their own for their final class project in Women's Studies 3311: Race, Femininity and Representation.

Williams conceded that while Wikipedia is the bane of many profs' existence, she even consults the popular website from time to time.

"The issue is that because Wikipedia is a cultural text and, therefore, participates in the creation of knowledge

... what sort of knowledge is being created because only certain people are participating in the editing process?" she asked.

"It passes as objective, it passes as universal knowledge, when, in fact, it comes from a very particular perspective — overwhelmingly white or overwhelmingly male."

Williams and Loyer first tasked each student with editing an existing Wiki that featured aboriginal women.

After that initial test, the class was given the reins to create its own page.

Holly Atjecoutay, an English major at Mount Royal, was among those to participate in the first run-through of the project.

She'd used Wikipedia in the past but always took the information provided with a "grain of salt."

Atjecoutay created a page on Samantha Nock, a Métis woman from British Columbia who writes an impactful

blog called A Halfbreed's Reasoning.

While her page remained intact, some of her peers saw their work taken down. Atjecoutay questioned how that was fair, especially after it was discovered in her class that YouTube Poop remains a valid Wiki.

"It's like my baby now and I don't want it to be taken down," she said of her page on Nock. "If it's taken down, I will revise it and put it back up." JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

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# Magnotta sentenced to life for Jun Lin murder

**Guilty verdict.** Luka Rocco Magnotta also convicted of four other non-murder charges

Luka Rocco Magnotta remained impassive as one of the 12 jurors who deliberated his fate uttered the word "guilty" to all five charges against him

in the slaying and dismemberment of Jun Lin, including first-degree murder.

Magnotta was later sentenced to life imprisonment on the murder charge, with no chance of applying for parole for 25 years.

On the four non-murder charges, the native of Scarborough, Ont., was given the maximum terms allowed under the Criminal Code, ranging

from two to 10 years. The sentences are concurrent.

Crown prosecutor Louis Bouthillier said he was fully expecting the jury to deliver the five guilty verdicts.

The other charges Magnotta was convicted of were criminally harassing Prime Minister Stephen Harper and other members of Parliament; mailing obscene and indecent material; committing an indignity

to a body; and publishing obscene materials.

Magnotta was seeking to be found not criminally responsible by way of mental disorder, with experts testifying he was in a psychotic state the night of the killing and couldn't tell right from wrong. As Magnotta had admitted to the physical acts, the jury's task was to determine his state of mind. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



Photos from the family of Jun Lin, the victim of a brutal slaying, were given to media April 2, 2013, in Montreal. HANDOUT/LIN FAMILY/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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## U.S. might lift ban on gay blood donors

U.S. health officials are recommending an end to America's lifetime ban on blood donations from gay and bisexual men, a 31-year-old policy that many medical groups and gay activists say is no longer justified.

The Food and Drug Administration said Tuesday it favours replacing the blanket ban with a new policy barring donations from men who have had gay sex in the previous year. FDA officials said that policy is supported by research and would put the U.S. in line with other countries including Australia, Japan and Britain.

The lifetime ban dates from the early years of the AIDS crisis and was intended to protect the blood supply from what was a then little-understood disease. But many medical groups, including the American Medical Association, say the policy is no longer supported by science, given advances in HIV testing. Gay activists say the lifetime ban is discriminatory and perpetuates negative stereotypes of homosexual men.

The agency will recommend the switch in draft guidelines early next year and move to finalize them after taking comments from the public, said FDA officials.

All blood donations are screened for HIV; however, the

test only detects the virus after it's been in the bloodstream about 10 days. That allows a brief window when the virus that causes AIDS can go undetected. According to government figures, men who have had sex with other men represent about two per cent of the U.S. population, yet account for at least 62 per cent of all new HIV infections in the U.S.

Tuesday's announcement is the culmination of years of government discussions re-examining the ban. Last month a panel of blood safety experts convened by Department of Health and Human Services voted 16-2 in favour of doing away with the lifetime ban. The panel recommended moving to a one-year ban, which bars donors who have had male-on-male sex during the previous 12 months.

Some gay activists said Tuesday that policy remains unrealistic and will still stigmatize gay and bisexual men.

"Some may believe this is a step forward, but in reality, requiring celibacy for a year is a de facto lifetime ban," the organization Gay Men's Health Crisis, a New York-based non-profit that supports AIDS prevention and care, said after the announcement.

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## VOICES

## TIME TO END CHILD POVERTY

Activist brothers Craig and Marc Kielburger explain that while Canada is a more prosperous country now than ever before, poverty levels have also never been higher

The number of Canadian children who depend on food banks every month could fill 6,200 school buses. And we would need a line of buses stretching almost 300 kilometres long for all the children in this country who live in poverty. Those are staggering figures in a country as wealthy as ours.

Every child on those buses has a different story. There's a boy whose single mother works two jobs, struggling just to pay the bills in East Vancouver. A child of an immigrant family in Toronto's Regent Park, who came here with nothing. A girl on the Attawapiskat First Nations reserve in northern Ontario, living in a tiny house with no heat or clean water, and who only just got a proper school this year.

The rate of child poverty in Canada has in-

creased since 1989 when our federal government voted unanimously to wipe it out by 2000. Twenty-five years later, more than 1.3 million Canadian children live below the poverty line.

The number of Canadians who rely on food banks grows every year. Almost 100 First Nations communities face drinking water advisories, and as many as 48 communities still lack a school. In the north, we've seen three families crammed into a small house, sleeping shoulder to shoulder on the floor. The same is often true of new immigrant families who arrive in our urban centres and share tiny apartments.

Our country has seen extraordinary economic growth, and at the same time deepening inequality.

If we believe every Canadian child deserves

the same fair chance to thrive, we need to ask how we give them that.

From Ecuador to India, in our international work we find that fighting child poverty is mostly about meeting families' most basic needs like food, clean water and education. Those challenges exist here. But in Canada, the problem is more complex than simply building a school, or putting food on the table.

In part, it's about empowering people to change their own lives.

Given the opportunity and the tools, young Canadians in low-income communities have an incredible capacity to make positive change — for themselves, their families and their neighbours. We've learned that working with youth in urban neighbourhoods like Toronto's Regent

Park, and with aboriginal youth in our Sacred Circle program. When young Canadians in these communities take on a service project — tackling issues like drug abuse or youth suicide — in the process of helping others they help themselves. Still, as Canadians we need to ask ourselves, what kind of country do we want to live in? Do we want a Canada where every child has the opportunity to succeed? If so, it's time to come up with a plan that will fulfil the promise we made 25 years ago to end child poverty.

*Brothers Craig and Marc Kielburger founded a platform for social change that includes the international charity Free The Children, the social enterprise Me to We and the youth empowerment movement We Day.*

## We asked you:

## What's the nicest thing a stranger has ever done for you?\*

Just in time for Christmas, we asked people from around the country to share their stories of random acts of kindness:



**Andrea Juby,**  
Vancouver

While I was looking for a new apartment this fall, my current building manager — who was a stranger to me at the time — offered to hold a beautiful light-filled studio for a whole month until I was ready to move in. She said, "We don't want to bankrupt you before Christmas!" I walked away on air, I was so moved. That immense kindness created a real sense of home for me. I am so grateful to her and I look forward to my opportunity to pay that kindness forward.



**Ena Goquiolay,**  
Calgary

When my family and I migrated to Canada in 2001, we didn't know anybody. A newly immigrated Filipino family, who my parents only knew by referral from mutual friends back home, picked us up from the airport and offered us a room in their small apartment until my parents could find a basement to rent. They drove us to government offices and garage sales. Their kids lent us their toys and showed us around the neighbourhood. Fourteen years later, we consider these once strangers part of our family.



**Brittney Skrypec,**  
Winnipeg

I went to (a coffee shop) to get gift cards for work, and the barista asked me if I was getting anything. I said no and she told me not to worry about it. "It's on us," she said. I'm glad I got it for free, it was so nice of her! Now every time I see her, I think of that time she made my day.



**Renata Tracy,**  
Toronto \*

Someone — their name was Aris — once rode their bike from Montreal to Toronto to see me for one day.

*Editor's note: Aris was not a stranger to Renata. That probably would have been creepy. There was a misunderstanding in Toronto about which question to ask, but this answer was so nice we thought we'd use it anyway :)*



**Stephen Freedman,**  
Ottawa

I asked a stranger for help once when my phone died. He was kind enough to let me use my phone to call my mom. She was supposed to pick me up and I was supposed to tell her where. I was downtown. There would have been a lot of confusion if I didn't call.



**Qian Giang,**  
Halifax

I crossed Spring Garden and just lost my (wallet) and another person helped me pick up my (wallet) and return to me.

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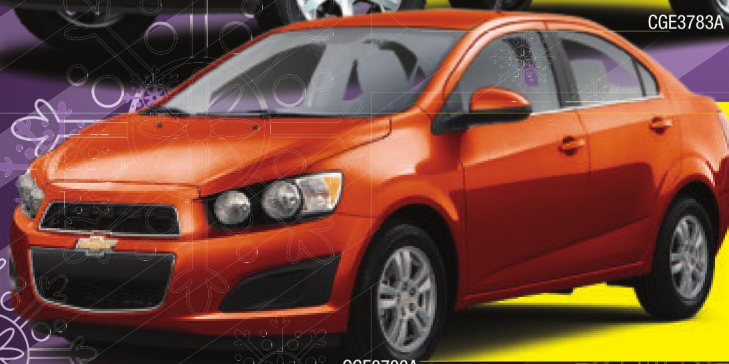


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Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON  
THE WORLD OF  
CELEBRITIES



Amy Adams GETTY IMAGES

## Amy Adams on the outs with Today over Sony scandal

It was just supposed to be a simple morning talk-show appearance for Amy Adams to promote her latest film, *Big Eyes*, and do a victory lap after her impressive Saturday Night Live hosting duty, but instead we have yet another repercussion of the Sony hacking scandal.

Adams was reportedly in the Today show green room, ready to go on the air, when she was told she would be asked to comment on the

Sony scandal. "Amy said she didn't want to contribute to the media coverage of it ... then she was abruptly told that her interview with Today was cancelled. She was shocked and upset," a source tells Page Six.

Another source, though, saw her as a bit more than "shocked and upset," claiming that Adams "was angry and acting belligerent, she was yelling at Today producers and reduced a young female staffer

to tears." Guess she did learn a thing or two from working with David O. Russell after all.

Probably the most entertaining part of all of this is the NBC spokesperson's statement explaining that "as a news program, the Today show doesn't allow guests to put restrictions on interviews."

Oh man. First of all, that's total bull. And second of all, it's so cute that you think of yourself as a news program. Adorable.

## Breaking! Frozen turned on Emily Blunt's water works

According to Emily Blunt, another adjective that can be applied to Disney's hugely successful animated musical *Frozen* is "labour-inducing." Blunt tells E! News that she watched the film just a day before she and husband John Krasinski welcomed daughter Hazel into the world. "Isn't that crazy? There was nothing on and I was like, 'Do you think this will be good?' And John indulged me and we went to see it," she says. As for when they got to the iconic Let it Go ditty? "I was like, 'I'm about to!'" Blunt remembers. "I'm



Emily Blunt GETTY IMAGES

literally about to let it go." Wait, maybe they shouldn't brag about that.

## Berlin fest won't let Fifty Shades wear out welcome

In a move that kind of makes Germany's prestigious Berlinale seem kind of desperate, *Fifty Shades of Grey* will be celebrating its international premiere at the 65th annual edition of the film festival, programmers announced this week. The press release even goes so far as to call the roles of Christian Grey (Jamie Dornan) and Anastasia Steel (Dakota Johnson) "iconic."

Guys, come on. This is soft-core S&M porn originally written as fan fiction for *Twilight*, an already pretty terrible book series.

The festival also announced they'll be screening the film only once, meaning either they're really trying to build up excitement around it or they're secretly embarrassed about screening it at all. I'm going with the latter.



Jamie Dornan GETTY IMAGES



Dakota Johnson GETTY IMAGES

## Frozen freezes out Swiftie for top entertainer spot

If you have children, or know someone who does, or just listened to one recently, the choice of Associated Press Entertainer of the Year won't come as much of a shock: It's *Frozen*, and in 2014, we just couldn't let it go.

Although the animated film opened late in 2013, the story of Elsa, Anna, Olaf, Kristoff and Sven easily outpaced other vote-getters like Sherlock star Benedict Cumberbatch, TV guru Shonda Rimes, musicians Beyoncé and Pharrell Williams, and even an entry for the culture's fixation on the female rear.

In 47 ballots submitted by members

and subscribers of the AP, *Frozen* won 12 votes. Taylor Swift had eight. Matthew McConaughey and Jimmy Fallon were tied for third with seven votes each. Voters were asked to consider who had the most influence on entertainment and culture in 2014.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

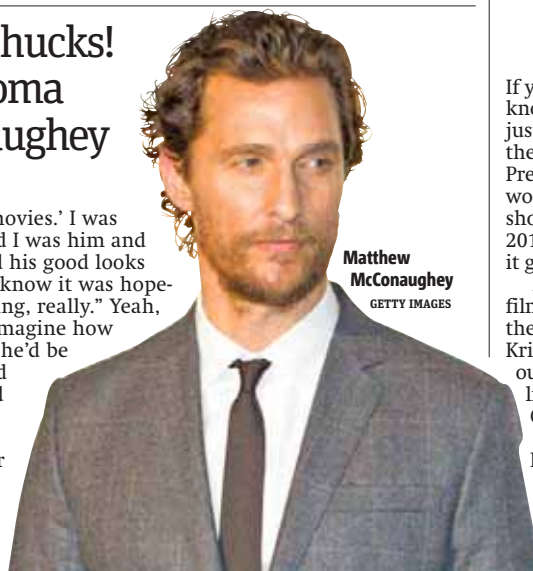
Frozen's Elsa and Anna CONTRIBUTED



## Alright, alright, aw shucks! Man wakes from coma thinking he's McConaughey

You think you know what disappointment feels like? Try being the British man who came out of a six-day coma in 2012 thinking he was Matthew McConaughey. "When I went to the toilet I went to look in the mirror and I was shocked because I didn't look like him, I didn't know what I was looking at," British car accident survivor Rory Curtis tells the Telegraph. "At times I was in hospital thinking, 'I can't wait to get out of here and back to

filming movies.' I was convinced I was him and that I had his good looks as well. I know it was hopeful thinking, really." Yeah, but just imagine how bummed he'd be if this had happened after McConaughey's Oscar win.



Matthew McConaughey GETTY IMAGES

2 SCENE

# Virgo hopes fans come 'along for the ride'

**Miniseries.** Book of Negroes director talks search for lead actress, challenge of story spanning decades



**HALEY RYAN**  
Metro in Halifax

Clement Virgo wasn't sure he even wanted to read the Book of Negroes.

Virgo, who directed and co-wrote the miniseries of the same name alongside author Lawrence Hill, said it was hard to get past the title before he realized it was referencing a real document that listed the names of black people who helped the British in the Revolutionary War.

"What brought me to the story is the main character, Aminata Diallo," the Canadian director said in an interview from Toronto. "She's a terrific heroine and her voice and her journey really ... made me want to spend four years trying to

bring her to the screen."

His "number one challenge" was finding someone who had the right acting chops, could embody Aminata's vulnerability and strength while playing both young and old — and he could enjoy spending nearly every scene with, Virgo said.

"Once we found Aunjanue Ellis ... I was quite relieved," he said.

Although the book was released as *Someone Knows My Name* in the United States where there has been a more "turbulent history" around race, Virgo said the miniseries will air as the *Book of Negroes* on BET and the title should be a "non-issue" once people know its historical roots.

Although the book was originally supposed to be turned into a feature film, Virgo said some of the most "visually interesting" work right now is on TV, and the book's dense material fits better in a miniseries than crammed into a movie.

Working with Hill in adapting the book was easy



Clement Virgo on the set of his miniseries, which begins airing Jan. 7 on CBC Television. JEFF HARPER/METRO

because he was "not precious" about his novel and was open to compressing

some aspects of the book while keeping it historically accurate, Virgo said.

Virgo said he tried to focus on what he felt was important to the story and making

## The reel deal

**"It's a very factual story that is moving."**

Director Clement Virgo  
on *The Book of Negroes*

Hill happy, while forgetting about fans of the book "looking over my shoulder."

"I was just trying to be truthful, and emotionally engaged, and hopefully they'll come along for the ride," he said.

The "genius" of Hill's story is how he thrust a *Forrest Gump*-like character into the history of slavery, the American Revolution, segregated settlements in Nova Scotia, and the journey back to Africa without it seeming like a lecture, Virgo said.

As Canadians watch the series, Virgo said he hopes they realize no matter where you come from, or who you are, you can overcome anything life throws at you.

"That's what Aminata represents; perseverance and resilience in the face of a lot of hardship," he said.

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## In theatres Christmas Day

Ratings and synopses courtesy of Rotten Tomatoes. For more movie reviews, trailers and news go to [RottenTomatoes.com](http://RottenTomatoes.com).

Ratings: **Certified Fresh:** 🍅 **Fresh:** 🍅 **Rotten:** 🍌 **Audience response:** 🍌 **Audience anticipation for the film:** +

### Mystery & Suspense



#### The Imitation Game

Director. Morten Tyldum

Stars. Benedict Cumberbatch, Keira Knightley

During the winter of 1952, British authorities entered the home of mathematician, cryptanalyst and war hero Alan Turing to investigate a burglary. They ended up arresting Turing on charges of 'gross indecency', that would lead to his conviction of homosexuality — little did officials know they were incriminating the pioneer of computing.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 86% Audience: +98%



### Kids/Family



#### Into the Woods

Director. Sean Anders

Stars. Meryl Streep, Emily Blunt, James Corden

Into the Woods is a modern twist on several of the beloved Brothers Grimm fairy tales, intertwining the plots of a few choice stories and exploring the consequences of the characters' wishes and quests. This humorous and heartfelt musical follows the classic tales of Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Rapunzel.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 71% Audience: +97%



### Drama



#### Big Eyes

Director. Tim Burton

Stars. Amy Adams, Christoph Waltz

Directed and produced by Tim Burton, Big Eyes is based on the true story of Walter Keane (Christoph Waltz), who was one of the most successful painters of the 1950s and early 1960s. The artist earned staggering notoriety by revolutionizing the commercialization and accessibility of popular art with his enigmatic paintings of waifs with big eyes.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 72% Audience: +95%



### Drama



#### Unbroken

Director. Angelina Jolie

Stars. Jack O'Connell, Domhnall Gleeson

Academy Award winner Angelina Jolie directs and produces Unbroken, following the incredible life of Olympian and war hero Louis "Louie" Zamperini (Jack O'Connell) who, along with two other crewmen, survived in a raft for 47 days after a near-fatal plane crash in the Second World War, only to be caught by the Japanese Navy and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 48% Audience: +96%



### Western/Drama



#### The Homesman

Director. Tommy Lee Jones

Stars. Tommy Lee Jones, Hilary Swank

When three women living on the edge of the American frontier are driven mad by harsh pioneer life, the task of saving them falls to the pious, independent-minded Mary Bee Cuddy (Hilary Swank). Transporting the women by covered wagon to Iowa, she soon realizes just how daunting the journey will be.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 77% Audience: 51%



### Mystery/Drama



#### The Gambler

Director. Rupert Wyatt

Stars. Mark Wahlberg

Jim Bennett (Mark Wahlberg) is a risk taker. Both an English professor and a high-stakes gambler, Bennett bets it all when he borrows from a gangster (Michael Kenneth Williams) and offers his own life as collateral. Always one step ahead, Bennett pits his creditor against the operator of a gambling ring (Alvin Ing) and leaves his dysfunctional relationship with his wealthy mother.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score

Critics: 62% Audience: +94%



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## How-to

### Use travel time wisely

1. Use travel time to relax, not to work. Power down and give your brain a break.
2. Load your iPad with that documentary you've been meaning to watch or that video tutorial you haven't had time to wrap your head around.
3. Review a language app of the foreign country you're heading to (quietly, of course). Even 10 simple words and phrases can go a long way — and two of them had better be "please" and "thank you."
4. Is the flight attendant/tour guide handing out local newspapers? Brush up on the news of the day at your destination, so you'll have something to add to the local chit-chat.
5. Never forget this all-important travel rule, whether you're on a plane, train or bus: Sleep when you can.

DOUG WALLACE/METRO

## New

### Westin facelift at Tremblant

Calling all ski bums: Le Westin Resort & Spa, Tremblant, Que., has recently completed a major reno. All 122 guest rooms have been redone, as has the more than 4,000 square feet of meeting space, the lobby and the front desk, spruced up with a living green wall. Expect natural wood details, earthy colours, warm fabrics and lots of big, big windows. Recharge the batteries, then hit the slopes — and repeat. Visit [StarwoodHotels.com](http://StarwoodHotels.com).

DOUG WALLACE/METRO



## Deal

### Escape to Portugal

Beat the winter blahs by heading to the Algarve. Gateways International is offering 14 days in Albufeira, Portugal, including hotel and airfare from Toronto, from \$1,775 (taxes included) for travel between Jan. 1 and March 31. Because this deal is based on availability, you can get a little more flexibility with dates, and with airfare being the bulk of the cost, you could stay an extra week for peanuts if you wanted to. Call 800-268-0900.

DOUG WALLACE/METRO



# The hot destinations of 2015

**Make a list.** Here's a rundown of accessible and fascinating trips to plan next year

See Cuba before it changes. Check out the World Expo in Milan. And if you're heading to New York City to see the view from One World Trade Center's observatory (scheduled to open late spring), take the subway to Queens and see if you can figure out why it topped Lonely Planet's "best in the U.S." destinations for 2015.

## Europe

The Milan Expo opens in May for six months and is expected to draw 20 million visitors. The Expo is the modern incarnation of the old World's Fairs that thrilled 19th- and 20th-century guests with new products and technology.

The theme of the Milan Expo is food and nutrition, and dozens of countries are participating. The U.S. will do its part by sending six authentic food trucks to Italy featuring regional American and ethnic fusion menus. Milan's famous opera house, La Scala, normally closed in the summer, will host performances daily during the Expo.

## Anniversaries

Singapore celebrates its golden Jubilee — 50 years of independence from Great Britain. Vietnam celebrates 70 years since achieving independence from France, and 50 years since the first U.S. combat troops arrived at Da Nang, which some historians say marked the start of the Vietnam War — even though Americans had been sent to the country in prior years.



The One World Trade observatory is expected to open in late spring 2015. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A number of U.S. museums and historic sites will be hosting exhibits and events to mark 150 years since the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and the end of the Civil War.

The new year also marks 70 years since the end of Second World War — both the defeat of Nazi Germany and the atomic bombing of Japan that ended the war in Asia. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are planning memorial services on the August anniversaries of the bombings, along with numerous arts projects and peace-themed events throughout the year.

In New Orleans, Aug. 29 will be the 10-year anniversary of the devastation of hurricane Katrina. "Come see the new New Orleans" is the tourist industry mantra for showcasing trendy emerging neighbourhoods and a vibrant restaurant scene.

South Dakota expects crowds for the 50th Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup in September and the 75th



Head over to South Dakota for the Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup in September. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in August.

## Cuba

The news that the U.S. intends to normalize relations with Cuba could lead to a rush of travellers hoping to experience the island before it loses its frozen-in-time culture to an onslaught of U.S. chain stores, hotels and tourists. But don't pack your bags

just yet: For the near future, the only way you can legally visit Cuba as an American citizen is to take a "people to people" cultural exchange tour licensed by the U.S. government. The tours are expensive and itineraries are limited.

## Theme Parks

Universal Studios Hollywood debuts two new attractions in

## New York City

Two big openings take place in the Big Apple in 2015: the observatory at One World Trade in late spring and the new Whitney Museum of American Art in May in Manhattan's Meatpacking District near the High Line and the Hudson River. The city also got a Christmas gift from Lonely Planet, which named the borough of Queens as a "best in the U.S." destination. Manhattan has been giving ground to trendy Brooklyn in recent years, but the elevation of Queens as the next big thing was a bit of a surprise. Not that New Yorkers and tourists alike don't love Queens attractions like the 1964 World's Fair grounds, the hipster beach scene in the Rockaways, Chinatown in Flushing, the Asian and Latin American ethnic mix in Jackson Heights and the emerging industrial-chic ambience of Long Island City. But the borough is not quite on tourist radars yet — though the Lonely Planet pronouncement may change that.

2015: Springfield, an immersive area opening in spring surrounding The Simpsons Ride, and Fast & Furious — Supercharged, a thrill ride opening in summer based on the film series.

Disneyland opens Frozen Fun in January in Anaheim, Calif., with a singalong, Olaf's Snow Fest, and meet-and-greets with Anna and Elsa, among other attractions. The California theme park also celebrates its 60th anniversary this year, with celebration details to be revealed at the end of January.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

3  
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# Home Matters

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# How to stop being afraid of the followup

**Career.** They've said they'd be in touch, but should you give them a shout in the meantime?

LAUREN  
MARINIGH  
TalentEgg.ca

Knowing how to follow up after an interview can be key to determining if you progress on to the next step in the hiring process.

If you're not the most assertive person, you may be afraid to reach out post-interview. Here are some important steps to follow that can help make the process less intimidating.

## Organize details

Often job descriptions will outline how or if they would like you to follow up.

Some jobs will state that only qualified applicants will be contacted, and will strictly outline not to follow up. Make sure you make note of these things as you are sending out applications. Once you have sent out a followup, make sure to make note of a response you receive. This will be crucial in knowing when to follow up again, or knowing the job status. There is nothing worse than following up when you've already heard

that a position is closed.

## Follow up with the appropriate person

Just as when you apply for a job, it's important that your followup be directed to the right person.

If you applied to a general HR email, you can try following up to that email, but chances are you won't hear back. Try to find the person in charge of hiring for that particular position. If you apply via LinkedIn, often you will be able to see who posted the job, and that will help identify the right person with whom to follow up.

## Know the platform

How should you be following up? If a position specifically states "No phone calls," follow up with an email. Email is generally a safer and less invasive bet anyway, as it allows for the hiring manager to reply back in their own time — and avoids creating an awkward situation.

You don't want to catch someone off-guard or annoy them by not following instructions that were clearly laid out in the first place. If you have a more casual relationship with someone involved in the hiring process (but not the key decision-maker), you may want to consider using a social media platform (like Twitter) to touch base.

## Send the right message

Not knowing what to share in a followup message is a common reason for opting out.

- Don't overthink it. If you're following up on an application, keep your message brief and inquire politely about the opportunity you've applied to. Reiterate your interest and ask if there have been any new developments in the hiring process.
- If you're following up on an interview, it's OK to go into more detail. Make sure to share that you appreciated the opportunity to connect, and bring up a few key discussion topics.



Refreshing your inbox repeatedly is only going to result in frustration. If the position is taken down and you still haven't heard back after a few weeks, it's safe to say they are not interested. ISTOCK

## Let it be and give it time

There is a fine line between following up and annoying human resources by being too persistent.

You'll definitely be contacted if you are a promising candidate, so imagine your followup as simply a confirmation of interest and an opportunity to (hopefully) gain more information about your application status in the process.

If you don't hear back from the hiring manager, don't take it personally.

While you may be disappointed that your carefully-crafted application didn't get a response, letting go of your disappointment is the only way to move forward.

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Wednesday, December 24, 2014

# Bacon is the icing on baked apple pancake

**Christmas brunch.**  
Bacon-apple upside-down pancake delivers a crowd-pleasing salty caramelized crunch



This recipe serves 4. MATTHEW MEAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Like Thanksgiving, Christmas is one of those holidays that requires aroma.

On Thanksgiving, we need the house to smell of turkey and stuffing and sweet potatoes. On Christmas, we need whiffs of indulgent breakfast items, like cinnamon rolls or a bubbling fruit crisp. Or maybe you prefer hash browns and bacon. Those get the job done nicely, too.

This year combine sweet and savoury with this baked pancake inspired by an upside-down cake. For ease, it can partially prepped the night before. To do that, just make the batter as directed in a blender, then refrigerate it overnight in the blender carafe. In the morning, just give it a quick whir to freshen it, then you're ready to assemble the pancake.

And that's when things get good. You start by frying bacon in a skillet. Once the bacon is crisp, you top it with a layer of thinly sliced apples. Give those

a couple minutes to soften, then you add a hefty sprinkle of brown sugar and cinnamon. Finally, you pour on the batter and pop the whole thing in the oven to finish.

When it's done, you overturn the pancake onto a serving platter and cut it into wedges. You may not need to, but there's no harm in dousing the whole thing with maple syrup.

1. Heat the oven to 375 F.
2. In a blender, combine the

milk, egg, oil and vanilla. Blender until smooth.

3. With the blender running on low, sprinkle in the flour, sugar, baking powder and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Stop blending as soon as the mixture is smooth. Set aside.

4. Use an apple corer or melon baller to core the apple, but leave the fruit intact. Set the apple on its side, then cut it into thin round slices. Set aside.

5. Heat a large oven-safe skillet over medium. Add the bacon and cook for 6 to 7 minutes on one side. Spoon out and discard about half of the fat in the pan, then turn the bacon strips to cook on the other side, laying them flat and evenly over the bottom of the pan.

6. Top the bacon with the apple slices, arranging them evenly. Cover the pan and cook for 2 minutes.

7. Mix together the brown sugar, cinnamon and a pinch of salt, then sprinkle the mixture over the apples.

8. Carefully and evenly pour the pancake batter over the apples and bacon. Place the skillet in the oven and bake until lightly browned and cooked through, about 20 minutes.

9. Let the pancake cool for 5 minutes. Use a paring knife to loosen the edges of the pancake, then overturn a large serving plate over the skillet. Invert the skillet to release the pancake onto the plate. Cut into wedges. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

## Ingredients

- 3/4 cup whole milk
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- Kosher salt
- 1 large apple
- 8 strips bacon
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon



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NFL

## Chargers' Rivers delivers good news

Chargers quarterback Philip Rivers practised Tuesday and said he's not feeling the effects of back and rib injuries.

Rivers said others in the locker-room are feeling more pain than he is, and then added: "I have nothing right now hurting at all."

Rivers declined to confirm or deny reports he has a bulging disc in his back. He's been listed on the injury report as having back and chest injuries.

Rivers sat out two practices last week and then led a dramatic comeback in a 38-35 overtime victory at San Francisco on Saturday night.

The Chargers (9-6) need to win at Kansas City on Sunday to clinch a wild-card berth.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## On the hot seat



"I don't look at myself as a three-win coach. 'I

know I'm better than that, yet this is where we're at right now."

New York Jets head coach Rex Ryan still carries confidence despite a poor season.

## MLB salaries

# \$3.8M

The Major League Baseball Players Association said Tuesday the average salary was \$3,818,923, up from \$3,386,212 last year. The 12.78 per cent hike was the biggest since a 12.83 per cent rise from 2000 to 2001.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

# Girgensons not lacking for love from Latvia

**NHL.** Second-year Sabre still atop all-star voting thanks to fervent fans in homeland

Zemgus Girgensons feels a little sheepish discussing how fans back home in Latvia have clicked and quadruple-clicked his name so often that he is running away with the NHL all-star game vote.

The Sabres forward appreciates the overwhelming support he's received from the Baltic nation. And yet the 20-year-old Girgensons doesn't consider himself worthy of being included among the league's elite.

"It's a little bit embarrassing and funny at the same time," Girgensons said, before the Sabres hit the road for a two-game swing that concludes Tuesday at Detroit. "It came out of nowhere. I know people know me back home, but I didn't think it was going to go that far. That's like crazy far."

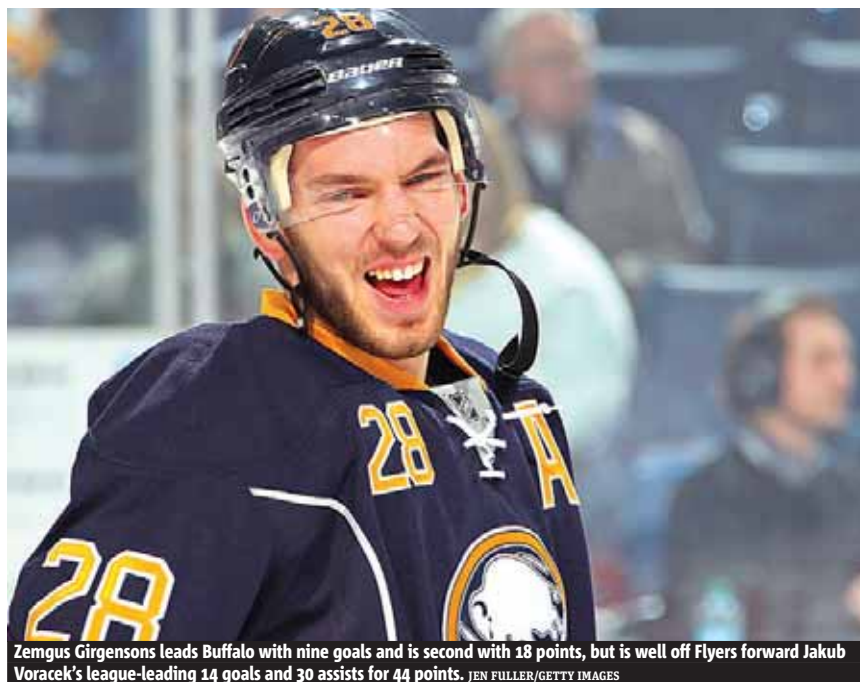
As of Tuesday, Girgensons has a league-leading 1,291,186 votes, with about 80 per cent coming from Latvia.

The only limit on voting is fans can use the same device no more than 10 times a day.

Chicago's Patrick Kane (815,990 votes) is second among forwards, followed by teammate Jonathan Toews (803,034).

Blackhawks players hold down the three other remaining spots eligible to be selected by vote. Chicago's Duncan Keith (790,922) and Brent Seabrook (641,736) lead defencemen, and Corey Crawford (714,471) leads goalies.

With voting set to close Jan.



Zemgus Girgensons leads Buffalo with nine goals and is second with 18 points, but is well off Flyers forward Jakub Voracek's league-leading 14 goals and 30 assists for 44 points. JEN FULLER/GETTY IMAGES

## Chicago (near) sweep

Chicago's Patrick Kane (815,990 votes) is second among forwards, followed by teammate Jonathan Toews (803,034).

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1. Girgensons is on the verge of clinching a spot to play in the all-star game at Columbus on Jan. 25.

"If I have to, it's awesome," said Girgensons, the only Lat-

vian currently playing in the NHL. "It'll be satisfaction to the fans, really."

Selected in the first-round of the 2012 draft, Girgensons has established himself as a

skilled two-way forward, and part of the rebuilding team's young core.

Girgensons leads Buffalo (13-18-3) with nine goals and is second with 18 points.

That puts him well off the league-leading pace. Dallas centre Tyler Seguin is first with 25 goals, while Philadelphia's Jakub Voracek tops the points list with 44.

Sabres coach Ted Nolan said Girgensons has nothing to be ashamed of.

"I wouldn't be embarrassed at all," Nolan said. "The whole nation's cheering for him, which is great to see. So he should feel a lot of pride."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

# Canada exposes the holes in Swiss game



Team Canada's Shea Theodore flattens Switzerland's Timo Meier during Tuesday night's exhibition game in Montreal. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Max Domi scored a hat trick to lead Canada to a 6-0 victory over Switzerland on Tuesday in the final pre-tournament game before the start of the junior world championship.

Domi scored twice in 13 seconds in the second period before completing his hat trick midway through the third. Brayden Point, Jake Virtanen and Nick Ritchie also scored for Canada, which went 2-0-1 in its three exhibition matches.

Goalie Zach Fucale made 14 saves for the shutout.

Netminder Ludovic Waeber

stopped 37 of 43 shots for Switzerland, which finished 0-2-0 in its exhibition games.

The 11-day world junior event, which takes place in Toronto and Montreal, opens on Boxing Day.

Canada outscored its opponents 12-4 through three pre-tournament tune-up games.

With Canada already up 1-0, Domi scored his first of the evening on the power play at 15:46 of the second period. The Swiss defencemen gave Domi far too much time with the puck, as the 19-year-old skated

towards the net with ease and found an opening between Waeber's pads.

With the Bell Centre public address announcer still belting out the details of Domi's goal, the Arizona Coyotes prospect quickly made it 3-0 for Canada as he deflected home a pass from Montreal-born Anthony Duclair.

Domi, son of retired NHLer Tie Domi, scored his third of the evening at 8:16 of the third period with a sharp wrist shot from the faceoff circle.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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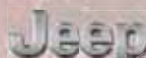
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## 2015 Mazda MX-5

- **Type.** Two-door, rear-wheel-drive compact sports car
- **Engine.** 2.0-litre inline four cylinder (167 hp)
- **Transmissions.** Six-speed manual or automatic
- **Price.** \$29,450 base (GX), \$42,720 as-tested (anniversary edition)

## Market position

Debuted in 1989 and continues to stick to original script of providing the most fun-to-drive roadster for the money. The Miata/MX-5 is the best-selling two-seat sports car in history and now has no direct competitors. It is a spiritual successor to traditional low-cost British roadsters, such as the MGB and TR6.

## Points

- 2015 Anniversary Edition the last iteration of current generation. An all-new MX-5 is due out next year.
- The U.S. and Canada each received only 100 copies of the Anniversary Edition, which sold out quickly.
- The only exterior colour combination is Soul Red Mica/Brilliant Black — the latter for the retractable hardtop.



The power hardtop roof is slick, but the manual top is easy to use.

## Safety features

Stability and traction control, four-wheel disc brakes with anti-lock and electronic brake force distribution, limited slip differential, anti-theft alarm, engine immobilizer theft deterrent, front and side airbags, seat-belt pretensioners with force limiter, side impact door beams, fog lights, Xenon headlights.

# Just don't mess with success

PHOTOS: MIKE GOETZ



**Review.** With a new MX-5 on the horizon, let's hope Mazda sticks with its Miata formula for fun and affordability

MIKE  
GOETZ  
drive@metronews.ca

Nobody rocks the concept of a fun and affordable two-seat roadster quite like Mazda. Then again, nobody else really tries anymore.

And who could blame them? Why invest in a separate platform, which is hard to share with other vehicles, for a shrinking pool of buyers?

These cars don't exude the prestige they used to in North America and Europe, as crossovers continue their unrelenting path to complete

vehicle domination. And there isn't much demand for them in China and other emerging markets, perhaps defeated by concerns about the weather, traffic and pollution, and a preference among the rich to be chauffeured rather than drive themselves around.

All of which makes the MX-5 even more precious to those of us who still enjoy driving.

From its inception in 1990, the Miata was conceived as a car to provide the most driving joy per dollar, by keeping engine size and power in check, and concentrating on lightness, balance, driver feedback and simplicity.

And although the car was renamed the MX-5 in 2006, Mazda hasn't strayed from the script since, including the all-new 2016 MX-5, which is waiting in the wings.

Compared to most every-



The cabin is tight but cosy, with miniature controls and little storage space.

thing else on the road, the Miata/MX-5 is a small and precise gem. And the 2015 25th-anniversary edition is even more gem-like, with some elegant cosmetic touches, and a knockout Soul Red Micra paint job.

With just 100 anniversary editions available in Canada,

they sold out months ago, but you can still buy the equally impressive 2014 GT model.

The MX-5 offers very light and agile handling. The 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine likes to rev, but takes premium fuel. Its 167 horsepower are not overwhelm-

## Compare



### 1 BMW Z4

Base price: \$56,395  
Good looking and powerful, but not visceral.



### 2 Porsche Boxster

Base price: \$59,685  
Good looking and powerful, and very visceral.



### 3 Nissan 370Z Roadster

Base price: \$51,238  
Excellent bits don't seem to add up to an engaging experience.

ing, but everything feels faster when you're this low and connected to the pavement. And the manual gearbox is one of the most satisfying to use in autodom.

The ride is not as stiff as you might expect, because it doesn't need a stiff suspension for handling, but it is a bit noisy on the highway.

The cabin is tight, but cosy, with miniature controls and little storage space. Your legs go straight out, with no bend to the knee.

The optional power hardtop roof is slick, but the manual top is super light and easy to use. The trunk is small but surprisingly useful.

Net result: The MX-5 is one very fine, two-seat, convertible sports car.

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**\$136 B/W<sup>†</sup>** 4.25% FOR 96 MONTHS

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# Nothing cuckoo about coconut coir

**Driving Force.** Fibres found between the shell and the nut is used for many things, including soaking up oil spills

**JIL  
MCINTOSH**  
drive@metronews.ca

By their very nature, cars and trucks present numerous environmental issues, and not just because of what comes out of their tailpipes.

When something goes wrong and fluids leak out of a vehicle, mechanics and emergency responders usually sop up the mess with several different types of absorbent products that can have environmental issues of their own.

"The most common products are made from clay or diatomaceous earth," says Toby Wilson, president of Coco Products, which makes a more environment-friendly product called Coco Absorb from coconut fibre.

"Clay products are mined out of the ground, and they're not renewable. Plus, clay can catch fire when it comes into contact with vegetable oil and will spontaneously combust. We're seeing a lot more of that with biodiesel.

"And if perlite (a type of soft volcanic glass) comes in contact with hydrochloric acid, it will create deadly fumes," he adds. "Our product is not reactive to anything out there."

Coco Absorb is made from

coconut pith, also known as coir, which is found between the coconut's hard green outer shell and the familiar dark-brown nut inside. Although it was originally just thrown away, coconut coir is now used in many different ways, including in gardening as a soil amendment or pressed into seedling pots, woven into rope, as insulation and, in some countries, burned as fuel.

It's also used in upholstery. Some auto manufacturers use coir in their seats, and they're experimenting with it as a possible ingredient in lightweight plastics and other materials.

The coir's honeycomb-like structure consists of narrow, hollow cells, which absorb fluids.

Unlike most absorbents, which mainly draw fluids into their outermost layers, the coconut pith uses capillary action to act like a sponge and draw liquids inside. It also holds them there, even as it dries, so it doesn't leach potentially toxic fluids after disposal.

One of coir's best features is that, due to a naturally occurring chemical compound called phenol, it bonds with oil first, and can absorb several times its weight. Once it's completely saturated with

**Quoted**

**“Clay can catch fire when it comes into contact with vegetable oil and will spontaneously combust. We’re seeing a lot more of that with biodiesel.”**

Toby Wilson, Coco Products president

## Core facts on coir

- Coconut trees don't require chemical fertilizers to grow. Each tree produces as many as 200 coconuts per year, making its fibre a renewable resource.
- Coconut coir can also be mixed with leftover waste paint so that it hardens into a solid that won't leach paint into the environment.
- Coconut-based absorbent is used at Walt Disney World, where it's most commonly used to soak up vomit.

oil, it won't absorb water.

Although research is still ongoing, coconut coir could therefore be used to contain and absorb oil spills with minimal environmental damage, sopping up the oil while leaving the clean water behind. Even when left there, the oil-soaked coir won't release any of it back into the water.

Coconut coir is also much lighter in weight than clay absorbents, which makes it easier to transport, store, and use.



**Coco Absorb is an environmentally friendly way to clean up fluid spills from vehicles. JILL MCINTOSH**

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## Classics. U.S.-Cuba economic thaw could spell the end for island's iconic cars

Cuba's iconic stock of refurbished vintage American sedans from the 1950s may be facing their last trips to the garage soon, following the historic thawing between Havana and Washington.

Flashy Pontiacs, Plymouths, Dodges and Chevrolets, as well as crudely patched and rickety classics, make up the Communist island's 70,000 "almondrones," cars affectionately called large almonds for their rounded shape.

Fancier classic models are rented for special occasions, while their more rundown counterparts are driven as taxis and by families.

But they all have one thing in common: They survived the Cuban Revolution, the Cold War, and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The almdrones owe their lasting nature to the master skills of local mechanics, as well as to the American embargo and Cuban authorities who put the brakes on replenishing the island's stock of cars.

**Read all about them**

British architect Norman Foster, struck by the cars' looks and upkeep during a trip to Cuba, paid tribute in the book *Havana: Autos and Architecture*, where he describes a tight relationship between the island's history and its vehicles.

Purchasing and selling the vehicles, which has only been allowed for three years, is only permitted for Cubans.

The easing of the five-decade U.S. trade embargo is likely to awaken the attention of car connoisseurs worldwide, who are eager to snatch up the classic models.

"You would have to pay me good money to sell my car," said Aramis Carmona, 40, watching tourists from his white and red 1953 Chevy with hubcaps and a chrome bumper. "It puts food on the table," the amateur mechanic said. "When I have a little money, I buy motor oil in-

stead of cooking oil, because I know that that will help me feed my family.”

He said he had given new life to the "wreck" he bought 10 years ago for \$7,000.

For many years, Cuba decided to swap its Western cars for revolutionary vehicles, like the Russian GAZ-69 jeep adopted by Fidel Castro.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Peugeot 404s made in Argentina, then Czech Skodas and Soviet Ladas tried to take over the road, but with limited success, as the vintage American models kept passing from hand to hand.

Peugeots and Chinese models appeared in the 1990s and 2000s, but they, too, never overpowered the omnipresent American classics.

Few original parts remain under the hoods, as owners have brought them back from the dead multiple times.

Carmona replaced his Chevy's original motor four years ago with a BMW diesel model that consumes far less fuel. The original went only six kilometres per litre. **AFP**



**Although other auto makers have come and gone, classic American cars from the 1950s still flourish on the streets of Cuba. AFP**



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## Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

## ♈ Aries

**March 21 - April 20**

Someone will turn to you and you won't let them down. You like few things better than charging to the rescue, especially when backing the underdog against a bully.

## ♉ Taurus

**April 21 - May 21**

A colleague will make you an offer you find hard to refuse today, but can you trust them? Find out if it is genuine and, if it is, let them know quickly you want in on the game.

## ♊ Gemini

**May 22 - June 21**

There will be some remarkable developments in the final days of the year but conserve your energy. The less you do now the more you will gain later on.

## ♋ Cancer

**June 22 - July 23**

Someone will try to pressure you into justifying what you are doing. Do what feels right to you and, if others don't like it, that's just too bad.

## ♌ Leo

**July 24 - Aug. 23**

Try to build bridges to people you don't always get along with. Just because you have different outlooks does not mean you cannot be friends.

## ♍ Virgo

**Aug. 24 - Sept. 23**

Don't worry if you have fallen out with a loved one. A few days from now you will be the best of friends again, so don't take it personally if they don't seem to care. They do really.

## ♎ Libra

**Sept. 24 - Oct. 23**

Make time for family members and make sure they know how much you love them. It won't hurt to be a bit more emotionally expressive.

## ♏ Scorpio

**Oct. 24 - Nov. 22**

According to your solar chart this is a good day for doing nothing much, so sit back, relax and let life come to you.

## ♐ Sagittarius

**Nov. 23 - Dec. 21**

Deep down you are a big softie and what happens today will prove it. Someone who needs a helping hand will have much to thank you for. It could be the start of a beautiful friendship.

## ♑ Capricorn

**Dec. 22 - Jan. 20**

For best results you should try to be on the move today. If you stay in the same place you could miss out on something special. Get moving and see where fate takes you.

## ♒ Aquarius

**Jan. 21 - Feb. 19**

Make the most of Mars in your sign to try something new and maybe take a few risks. You have always been the adventurous sort and now you are determined to show you have absolutely no fear.

## ♓ Pisces

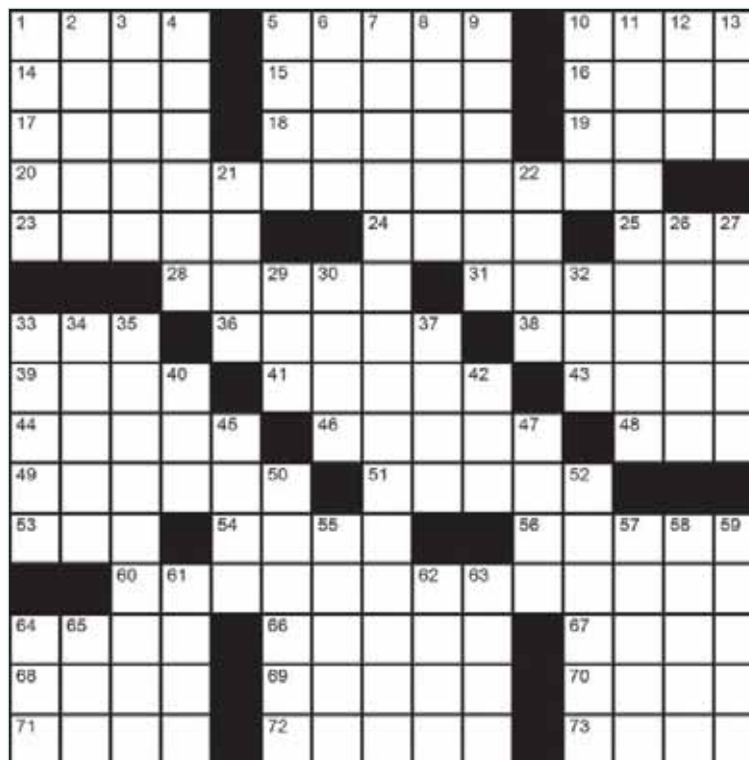
**Feb. 20 - March 20**

Yake life at a sensible pace, especially if you are hosting friends and family over the holiday period. Don't try to do everything yourself.

## Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan

## Across

1. Herd baby
5. Pointer
10. Hurt
14. Spoken
15. "Silver Bells" bit: "Children laughing / People passing / Meeting \_\_ after..."
16. Christmastime 'pet'
17. Ms. Suvani
18. Reindeers' sniffers
19. "God \_\_ Ye Merry, Gentlemen"
20. "On the seventh day of Christmas / My true love gave to me / Seven \_\_..." - Bob & Doug McKenzie, "12 Days of Christmas"
23. "Silent Night": "\_\_\_ in heavenly peace."
24. "Let It Snow": "But the \_\_ is so delightful."
25. Mr. Capote, shortly
28. Christmas star
31. Court game
33. Got [abbr.]
36. Rudolph's straps
38. Terre-\_\_ (Newfoundland)
39. "\_\_\_! The Herald Angels Sing"
41. Principle
43. 'Game' suffix
44. Cookies left for #28-Across, perhaps
46. Tint-to-hair appliers
48. Jr.'s fathers
49. Reindeer crew



member

51. Threshold
53. Ands: French
54. Bellow!
56. Fragrance
60. Gift disguiser: 2 wds.
64. "\_\_\_ in a Manger"
66. Bird of Jove

67. Roman emperor

68. Ms. Gilbert
69. Mythological blood
70. Mr. Kringle
71. Religious song
72. \_\_\_. (Food packaging meas.)
73. Fully satisfy

## Down

1. Free passes, briefly
2. "It's been \_\_ pleasure."
3. Mr. Bass
4. Snowy droplets
5. \_\_ other (With-out equals)

6. "\_\_\_ two minds..."
7. "Jingle Bells": "A day or two ago / I thought I'd take a ride / And soon \_\_\_ / Was seated by my side."
8. Fragrant resin

9. Skiing locale
10. Churchyard = God's \_\_
11. They're roasting in the famous Christmas carol
12. G'days
13. Dine
21. Box
22. Eager
26. Christmastime tune by Joni Mitchell
27. Device operators
29. Mesh
30. Linked
32. Belonging to Omaha's li'l state
33. Providence, \_\_ Island
34. Jeweller's unit, variably
35. Wear a toque, scarf, parka and gloves: 2 wds.
37. Visionary
40. \_\_-i-Noor Diamond
42. Prefix with 'cycle'
45. Evening, in Italy
47. Period of cold weather
50. Corral: 2 wds.
52. "Christmas with the \_\_\_" (2004)
55. Speedily
57. Classical show
58. Virtue
59. Came about
61. Mr. Gosling
62. Sugar substitute, Sweet'\_\_
63. Actor Mr. Frobe
64. Fireplace stuff
65. Method

## Yesterday's Crossword



## Online

See today's answers at  
metronews.ca/answers



## Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

## How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

## Yesterday's Sudoku



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